

18104028D

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 124

Offered February 6, 2018

Commending Simone Askew.

Patrons—Petersen, Barker, Black, Carrico, Chafin, Chase, Cosgrove, Dance, Deeds, Dunnivant, Ebbin, Edwards, Favola, Hanger, Howell, Lewis, Locke, Lucas, Marsden, Mason, McClellan, McDougale, McPike, Newman, Norment, Obenshain, Peake, Reeves, Ruff, Saslaw, Spruill, Stanley, Stuart, Sturtevant, Suetterlein, Surovell, Vogel, Wagner and Wexton

WHEREAS, in 2017, Simone Askew of Fairfax made history when she became the first African American woman to serve as first captain of the Corps of Cadets at the United States Military Academy at West Point; and

WHEREAS, born in Bethesda, Maryland, Simone Askew moved to Fairfax in her youth and attended Fairfax High School; she first developed an interest in military service as a young girl, when she watched military cadets march in formation during an Army-Navy football game; and

WHEREAS, while at Fairfax High School, Simone Askew rowed crew, ran track, played basketball, and captained the volleyball team; she also started the school's Black Student Union, served as student body president, and spent summers volunteering at orphanages in the Dominican Republic; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, Simone Askew began attending the United States Military Academy at West Point, where she rowed crew and studied international history; and

WHEREAS, at the beginning of her fourth year in August 2017, Simone Askew was selected to serve as West Point's first captain, the highest position in the cadet chain of command; in that role, she leads the 4,400-member Corps of Cadets, sets a class agenda, and acts as a liaison between cadets and the academy's administration; and

WHEREAS, Simone Askew is only the fifth woman to serve as first captain and the first African American woman; she was among 15 finalists for the role chosen from a pool of 180 candidates; and

WHEREAS, on December 9, 2017, Simone Askew fulfilled a lifelong dream when she led the Corps of Cadets in a ceremonial "March On" before the Army-Navy football game at Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Simone Askew is also an EXCEL Scholar, a graduate of the Army's Air Assault School, a member of the Phi Alpha Theta Honorary National History Society, and the recipient of the Black Engineer of the Year Award for Military Leadership; and

WHEREAS, following her graduation in the spring of 2018, Simone Askew will attend the University of Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar; she will then begin her service in the United States Army Corps of Engineers; and

WHEREAS, Simone Askew's remarkable accomplishments exemplify the United States Military Academy's values of duty, honor, and country, and have helped pave the way for other African American women to serve as cadet leaders; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Simone Askew on her historic selection as the first African American woman to serve as first captain of the United States Military Academy's Corps of Cadets; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Simone Askew as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for her impressive accomplishments as a cadet leader and scholar.

INTRODUCED

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